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**4th QUARTER
DEC 2008**

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Positions open : (all above positions for contingency deputies are open as well) Rapier, Archery, Thrown Weapons, Games

Champions of Earnrokke

**The new Champions of the Shire of Earnrokke are:
Heavy Weapons- Baron William of the Battered Helm
Equestrian-Lady Francesca da Monte
Arts and Sciences -Banu Shadra**

Archery -Banu Shadra

Shire News

This quarter we will feature the Order of Precedence to show the people of Earnrokke

You can find any one who has an award in An tir at

<http://op.antirheralds.org/op/op.html>

MEETINGS

Business –The shire business meeting is held on the last Tuesday of every month, at 7:00 pm,. Place and directions are posted on the website and elist calendar, or email THL Agelos. At HuntHaven, 2163 Hastie Lake Rd, Oak Harbor, WA 98277

ONLINE RESOURCES

Shire Website <http://www.earnrokke.antir.sca.org/> *Bookmark our shire website and send us any updated information.*

Shire Email List <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Earnrokke/> *Join us for online discussion and calendar information about upcoming events.*

Shire Social Network <http://earnrokke.ning.com/> *Please feel free to create your own social page and it will be linked to our shire website. If you already have a social page from MYSPACE or FACEBOOK, please use the link provided on the Earnrokke ning and link your existing page to us.*

FEATURED ARTICLE



Fig. 1
Trinity Harp – Trinity College

PYROGRAPHY

By: Siobhan a Burc

The decorations which have best withstood the ravages of time, and are the most chaste and refined, have been produced with the simplest means possible... the chisel, mallet, and marble; chisel and wood; modeling tool, clay and fire; sheet-metal and hammer. What could be more direct and simple than the red-hot iron and wood? In figure 2 below the Medieval Chest in Burnt Wood is an example of early 16th century English workmanship.

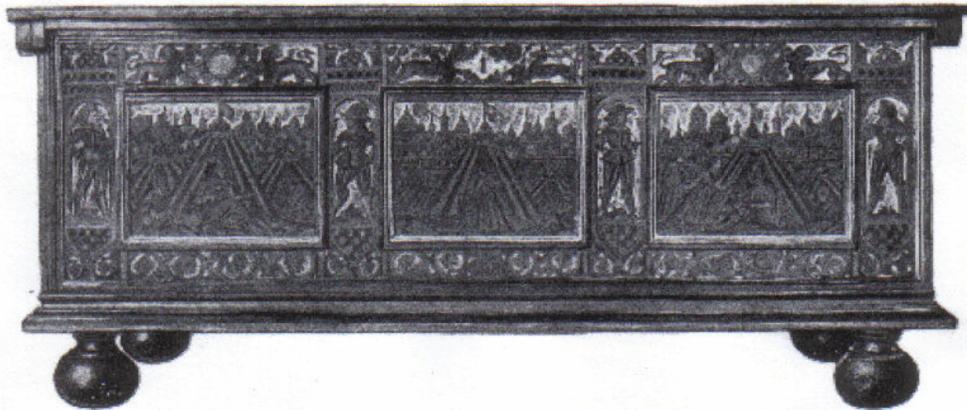


Fig. 2

Burnt wood chest - Cornell University

The word pyrography is derived from two Greek words, *pyro* meaning *fire* and *graphy* meaning *writing*. Pyrography or poker work is a method of decorating wood by charring or carbonizing the surface by means of hot tools. One of the chief characteristics of this style of artwork is the softness of the resulting line, not only is there a black line where the poker touches and scorches the wood but the intense heat leaves a faded edge on either side of the main dark line. This method of decorating wood also seals the wood in the areas where it has been burnt. The burnt line then creates an effective defined line that prevents stains from spreading from one area to another.

Little is known about the tools used for pyrography in the middle ages. We do know that the woodworking and leather working tools of the middle ages are much the same as the basic woodworking tools we have today. That includes the axe or hatchet, chisels of various sizes, planes, saws, mallets and hammers for woodwork and the awl for leather. But knowing that during the Victorian times they called this style of art “Poker Art” due to the fact that usually the artist had a charcoal stove with holes all the way around it, in which they would place “pokers” of various shapes and sizes. When the poker was red hot they would take it out and use it to draw onto wood. Knowing that the basic hand tools did not change much until the age of technology, it is reasonable to believe that the artist could take simple chisels or tools like the leather working awl and have heated the tip in a fire and not only drawn on wood but used the different shaped tips to imprint various designs.



- Sewing ●
- Stitching ■
- Closing ●
- Stabbing ●
- Sailmaker's ▲
- Scratching ●
- Saddler's ▽

Fig. 3 Medieval awl used for leather work, also showing different shaped tips to the awl used for various types of sewing.

The problem is that most wood finishes do not stand up to the test of time, sometimes worn off or deteriorated, or the piece may have been refinished years after first being made. Therefore we don't know for sure what finishes were used in the middle ages. Although oils like linseed oil and walnut oil are made much the way they would have made during the middle ages.

A red tint or stain could be added to the wood by using a linseed oil with cinnabar added while making the linseed oil. The oil is then brushed onto the wood and set to dry in the sun, a second coat could then be added in the same fashion.

To make the linseed oil you would take flax seed and dry it in a pan over a fire without water. The dried seed is then pounded into a very fine powder in a mortar and pestle. The powder is poured back into the pan, you add a little water and heat it through. The mixture is poured into a new straining cloth and pressed to extract the oil. To add the red tint the cinnabar is ground in the mortar and pestle with the oil and mixed well. Then this mixture would be used to redden the wood.

On the front cover a beautiful example of pyrographic art is the Trinity Harp or Brian Boru Harp, which dates from about the year 1220, having been made for the famous Donnchadh Cairbre O'Brien, King of Thomond, whose death is recorded on the 8th March 1242-43. The Trinity harp is wonderfully decorated using pyrography, carving and color. Below in figure 4 is the 16th century Queen Mary Harp (similar to the Brian Boru Harp) that is ornamented with geometric designs and gems.



Fig 4
*The Queen Mary Harp, 16th century.
Museum of Antiquities, National Museum, Edinburgh, Scotland.*



Fig. 5
16th Century Italian chest lid – Decorating Wood Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 2002

The Renaissance bloomed in Italy during the fifteenth century, resulting in furniture based on proportions and consistency of volumes. Decoration also shared the classical spirit that dominated the time period. Furniture was transformed by use of decoration techniques that became more diverse such as gilding, painting, pyrography and punching. The detail on the lid of the 16th century Italian chest in fig. 5 above resembles paint but was actually done using pyrography.

References:

Jones, Bernard E. – *The Practical Woodworker* Ten Speed Press 1983
Decorating Wood Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 2002

Figures:

1. *Trinity Harp* - Library at Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland, 15th century
<http://carverscompanion.com/Ezine/Vol8Issue6/KMenendez/KMenendez2.html>
2. *Burnt wood chest* - Cornell University Page 495, image 505 of 1064,
<http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/moa/pageviewer?frames=1&coll=moa&view=50&root=/moa/cent/cent0052/&tif=00505.TIF&cite=http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/moa/moa-cgi?notisid=ABP2287-0052-97>
3. *Medieval leather awl* - <http://www.personal.utulsa.edu/~Marc-Carlson/leather/plwt.html>
4. *The Queen Mary Harp, 16th century*.- Museum of Antiquities, National Museum, Edinburgh, Scotland. www.zwoje-scrolls.com/zwoje38/text06p.htm
5. *16th Century Italian chest lid* – *Decorating Wood* Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 2002

On line:

<http://www.vikinganswerlady.com/wood.shtml>

<http://www.patrickfaleur.com/pyrography/wpage28.htm>

www.libraryireland.com/IrishMusic/III.php

<http://www.activecarpentry.com/art/medieval-carpentry-tools.php>

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<http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/moa/pageviewer?frames=1&coll=moa&view=50&root=/moa/cent/cent0052/&tif=00505.TIF&cite=http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/moa/moa-cgi?notisid=ABP2287-0052-97>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE Known World Handbook is for sale for \$15 per copy for shire members. This is a huge oversize book which contains many 'how to' articles and much information on basic historical and SCA topics for oldtimers and newcomers alike. Please contact Donwenna if you would like to purchase a copy.

Contact : donwenna@gmail.com

CALENDAR 2009

Summer Hunt V July 24-26, 2009 <http://www.summerhunt.org/>

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